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"whose origins and tracks are largely independent of the geographical contours, and whose clouds are higher than most of the mountains." These conditions are obviously unlike those in regions where mountains are great breeding places for thunderstorms. The monthly maps show that the control of the rainfall is less dependent upon the topography than upon the seasonal migrations of the main rainfall belt to and from the equator. The winter rains of the southwest advance as the summer rains retreat, and vice versa. Similarly also the southern and southeastern coastal belt rains advance and retreat seasonally. Occasionally the winter rains of the southwest, and the southern coastal belt rains also, advance inland as far as Kimberley and Bloemfontein.

There are special brief discussions of the mean hourly variation of rainfall at Kenilworth (Kimberley); of the average number of rainy days; the greatest rainfall in one year; and the heaviest rainfall in 24 hours, for each section. A note on South African hailstorms brings out some interesting facts. Several cases of remarkably large hailstones are recorded. At Maritzburg in April, 1874, hailstones were "too big to go into a breakfast cup" ($4\frac{1}{2}$ by $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter; weight $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds). In another hailstorm in December, 1915, one stone measured 4 by 4 by $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Numerous hailstones fell which weighed over three-quarters of a pound. Many sheep were killed. One hailstone went through a roof of corrugated iron, leaving a hole about 3 inches in diameter. Two observers reported that the majority of the hailstones were the size of tennis balls.

A bibliography is appended which will prove useful in any general or historical study of the subject.

R. DE C. WARD

RURAL LIFE IN NEW YORK STATE

E. O. FIPPIN. **Rural New York.** xv and 381 pp.; maps, diagrs., ills., index. (Rural State and Province Series, edit. by L. H. Bailey.) The Macmillan Co., New York, 1921. 7 x 5 inches.

Agriculture, the oldest of industries, is, in the minds of many of those who practice it and of more who depend upon it for the necessities of life, a little-understood vocation just to be taken for granted, like gravity. Both producers and consumers need enlightenment as to the factors on which agriculture depends.

The farmer needs an understanding, not merely of the practices and methods of his community, but of the whole agricultural region in which he lives. He needs further to appreciate the significance to him of industrial developments in other fields and how these change market demands. He must have an agricultural perspective on the country and perhaps the world; he must know when conservatism in agricultural practices is sane and when foolish. He must know agriculture as it is, however untenable this new knowledge may make the agricultural faith he may have inherited from the past.

The consumer, whether in home or factory, needs to appreciate that modern farming is a business and, like other lines of business, is subject to economic laws and principles. As a matter of useful information and for his own guidance he should know the reason of the distribution of agricultural areas, the reason for general farming in the northeastern states, why land apparently going to waste may mean agricultural efficiency, why farmers cannot change crops as readily as a machine shop can change patterns, what must be produced near to the consuming area, why the marketing of farm products is often costly, and many other matters that the up-to-date farmer has to understand and appraise in planning and carrying on his business.

Fippin's "Rural New York," the first of a series of volumes on the several states of the country, is a book for urban and rural people. The reader—and he can hardly fail to be an interested reader—will find that this little volume gives a real understanding of rural New York and throws much light upon rural life and conditions in the other northeastern states where mixed, or general, farming predominates.

The volume is well ordered, clearly written, and, barring many illustrative maps that are too minute for usefulness, eminently successful. It should be widely read, for it is a distinct contribution to our literature on rural life. No one can fail to gain from it a better appreciation of farming as it is and a keener sympathy for the farmer, who must often labor with only a partial understanding of the conditions that influence his success. No would-be back-to-the-lander, particularly in New York state, should fail to study this volume carefully before he "obeys that impulse."

RICHARD ELWOOD DODGE